



Part III

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Chapter 1

1 Determine the Direction of Cooperation at the Beginning

—Identification and Formulation of Projects—



Project formulation study on a personnel training course for Bolivia

Project Cycle and Activities

JICA's activities are carried out within an integrated process known as the "project cycle," which consists of a series of stages: planning, implementation, evaluation, and feedback into the planning stage of the next project. To improve the content of these activities and to enhance the effect of cooperation, each stage in the project cycle requires appropriate monitoring and consistent management. Listed below are brief explanations of what is done at each stage.

1) Planning

Study and analysis of the needs and requests of developing countries; definition of target groups; specification of the purpose, targets, and resources to be input (number of experts and staff to be dispatched, costs required for the projects as a whole, etc.), and details of activities.

2) Implementation

Execution of projects according to plan; review of the plan through monitoring; and development of results.

3) Evaluation

Assessment as to whether or not the results of a project accord with the original targets; measurement of the effects of the project; investigation into why a project was given a poor evaluation; and feedback of the findings into future projects.

In Part III of this report, we shall be looking at JICA programs in accordance with the following four items (i.e., the three stages of the project cycle and efforts to strengthen the foundations of program implementation).

- a. Identification, formulation and planning (Chapter 1)
- b. Program implementation (Chapter 2)
- c. Evaluation and follow-up (Chapter 3)
- d. Strengthening the foundations of program implementation (Chapter 4)

Understanding Current Conditions and Needs

Importance of a Starting Point for Cooperation

In order to make JICA cooperation projects more effective, we first need to gain an accurate idea of the needs of developing countries. In addition, we need to plan and implement projects in line with individual countries' specific features. This approach requires knowledge of social and economic conditions in developing countries as well as of their organizational and institutional structures. This is what we mean by the country-specific approach.

In recent years, there has been an increase in concern for certain fields, such as education, agricultural development, urban development, pollution, and poverty, which are shared by developing countries. There is also concern for global warming countermeasures that need to be addressed on a global scale and which involve not only developing countries but also developed countries. In order to address these issues efficiently and effectively, it is important to accumulate knowledge about development assistance and the results of past development projects and at the same time to establish a system that enables us to obtain prompt and accurate information at all times. This is called an issue-specific approach.

JICA projects are carried out based upon requests for aid that are submitted by the government of the recipient country through diplomatic channels. However, some developing countries have not yet gained the ability to determine the kinds of projects that would most likely contribute to their development and to formulate national policies.

Furthermore, although a particular country may be aware of its needs and is able to formulate projects on its own, it may still be inadequately equipped to administer aid from other countries. JICA adopts country-specific and issue-specific approaches in its relations with such countries. We first

analyze the conditions and issues facing the developing country and take a close look at its course of development. We then assist them with formulating practical cooperation projects.

Determining the future direction of cooperation at the beginning is necessary if the project is to succeed, and is as important as the evaluation at the final stage.

JICA includes funds in its budget to cover the costs involved in making aid more efficient, with a view to strengthening both the initial and final stages of cooperation. Among these activities, we will explain (1) those related to the identification and formulation of projects, and (2) those related to the collection and collation of country-specific and issue-specific information.

Identification and Formulation of Projects

Project Formulation Studies

Sometimes requests from developing countries are not embodied as a specific project partly due to the requesting country's lack of understanding of Japan's cooperation schemes, even though those requests concern JICA's development priority sectors for the country. When a request for a project is made, if the analysis of components of the project is insufficient, it makes it difficult to determine whether to adopt it or not.

In such cases, we need to assess and analyze the conditions in the priority sectors, the appropriateness of the proposed assistance, the country's capacity and means of project implementation, and the impact of our cooperation on the country's economic and social development. At the same time, through discussions with the country's government and other relevant organizations (including NGOs), the most suitable cooperation plan will then be formulated.

JICA formulates such cooperation plans by sending study teams from Japan or hiring local consultants to conduct "project formulation studies*." In fiscal 2002, 85 studies were carried out in 49 developing countries.

The number of studies by region is as follows.

1) Asia:	34	(40%)
2) Middle East:	12	(14%)
3) Africa:	14	(16%)
4) Latin America:	23	(27%)
5) Oceania:	2	(2%)
6) Europe:	0	(0%)

Intra-regional Cooperation Workshops on Specific Fields

Some issues that confront developing countries are specific to a particular country. Others are shared by surrounding countries and are difficult to solve by one country alone, or can be solved more efficiently through joint action.

In order to identify and formulate projects that address common issues in the region, JICA holds local workshops with the countries concerned, other aid agencies, and international organizations to discuss how cooperation might best be provided.

In fiscal 2002, workshops were held on nine issues such as education (in Central America) and HIV/AIDS (in the Caribbean).

Placement of Project Formulation Advisors

Project formulation advisors* are placed at overseas offices as experts in priority development fields in developing countries if necessary. Through thorough consultation and coordination with related organizations in the recipient country, project formulation advisors analyze recipient country's needs, formulate high-quality projects, and process requested projects to look into the relative priority of requested projects and cooperation plans.

As indicated below, in recent years there has been an increase in new aid recipient countries and issues, and a variety of devices in aid methods has been called for. This means that project formulation advisors are playing an increasingly important role in identifying and formulating high-quality projects likely to prove effective in the development process. This process involves the following.

- 1) Countries where Japan has had little experience in aid provision and new aid-recipient countries
- 2) New assistance issues such as peacebuilding
- 3) New aid methods such as South-South cooperation*, and coordination and collaboration with other aid agencies.

In fiscal 2002, 100 project formulation advisors were sent to 61 countries.

Project Confirmation Studies

Promotion of effective and efficient aid is dependent not only on consultation on specific cooperation projects but also on dialogue at the working level, such as explanations of JICA's project implementation plans based on the results of project formulation studies and country-specific information-



Seminar on Millennium Development Goals* in Honduras

gathering activities. Promotion of dialogue at the policy level regarding the Japanese government's aid policy and the recipient's development plan is also important. In order to meet such needs, the following consultations and discussions were carried out in the project confirmation study.

- 1) Consultation on implementation policies for JICA projects
- 2) Discussion of policies and measures to address development issues
- 3) Arranging requested projects in terms of their order of priority and specific details, examining the progress and problems of projects currently under way, offering an explanation of our aid schemes, and discussing other topics that bear on the implementation of aid

Project confirmation studies are intended to determine the future direction of cooperation and to help us implement projects effectively and efficiently. In fiscal 2002, 34 study teams were sent to 34 countries to confirm and discuss the direction of cooperation for requested projects. The results by region are as follows.

1) Asia:	21	(62%)
2) Middle East:	0	(0%)
3) Africa:	4	(12%)
4) Latin America:	7	(20%)
5) Oceania:	0	(0%)
6) Europe:	2	(6%)

Collecting and Collating Country-specific and Issue-specific Information

■ Creating a Country-specific Information Database

Acquisition and analysis of basic information on developing countries plays an indispensable role in strengthening the country-specific approach. JICA gathers and analyzes basic socioeconomic information on developing countries as well as information on technology and aid trends at other aid agencies. In 1998, we launched a county-specific information system that consolidates and integrates experience and information acquired during past Japanese aid activities.

Data of projects implemented by JICA, which are managed in this system, have been made public on the JICA homepage since fiscal 1999.

■ Network of Experts

In order to strengthen the issue-specific approach, it is necessary to constantly collect appropriate information such as knowledge of development assistance and past projects. For that purpose, JICA has started building a network among JICA staff and experts on each development issue and establishing a system for storing information and know-how.

In the meantime, JICA is building a computer system in which accumulated information about past projects and know-how will be made accessible both internally and externally.

Figure 3-1 Flow of Projects

